

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2001-172-C - ORDER NO. 2001-760
AUGUST 17, 2001

IN RE: Application of Horry Telephone Cooperative,) ORDER ✓
Inc. for Approval of an Increase in its Rates) GRANTING
and Charges.) CONFIDENTIALITY

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the Commission) on the Motion of Horry Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Horry or the Coop.) for this Commission to treat certain responses to the Commission Staff's Data Request No. 1 as confidential. Horry maintains that the material contains proprietary business information consisting of detailed information on the terms of debt incurred by Horry and detailed financial audit information regarding its debt. Horry believes that in light of the more competitive telecommunications environment existing within South Carolina, that it is not appropriate to make such detailed information regarding Horry's operations publicly available. Horry alleges that access to this information could give actual and potential competitors an unfair competitive advantage.

The Coop. states that it will make the particular material available to those parties in the proceeding that are not competitors, potential competitors, or affiliates of competitors or potential competitors of Horry, providing those parties seeking to review the information execute an appropriate protective agreement to ensure that the information remains confidential. Horry states a belief that the material referred to is not

appropriate for public viewing or release. The material involved was furnished with the Motion in a sealed envelope.

After reviewing the Motion and material, we agree with Horry's view that the material in question should be treated as confidential, for the reasons outlined by Horry. The detailed information on the terms of debt incurred by Horry and detailed financial audit information regarding the Coop.'s debt should certainly not be made available for public review, as it could give actual and potential competitors an unfair competitive advantage.

Accordingly, we grant the Motion as filed, and the material described declared to be confidential and proprietary. The material, however, shall be made available to those parties in the proceeding that are not competitors, potential competitors, or affiliates of competitors or potential competitors of Horry, upon execution of an appropriate protective agreement.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director

(SEAL)